

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY LOME
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INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, GV, TO
SUBJECT: SEKOU TOURE MAKES STATE VISIT TO TOGO

1. PRESIDENT SEKOU TOURE OF GUINEA VISITED TOGO ON A
STATE VISIT FROM JUNE 5-8. ACCORDING TO A FOREIGN MINISTRY
SOURCE, THE INVITATION DATES BACK TO PRESIDENT EYADEMA'S
VISIT TO GUINEA IN EARLY 1976. SEKOU TOURE'S DECISION TO
ACCEPT THAT INVITATION AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, IS A DIRECT
RESULT OF HIS "REENTRY INTO AFRICAN BROTHERHOOD" FOLLOWING
HIS RECONCILIATION WITH PRESIDENTS HOUPHOUET OF IVORY
COAST AND SENGHOR OF SENEGAL LAST APRIL. IT WAS SEKOU
TOURE'S FIRST VISIT TO TOGO SINCE EYADEMA CAME TO POWER
IN 1967.

2. ALTHOUGH THE COMINGS AND GOINGS OF CHIEFS OF STATE
HAVE BECOME ALMOST ROUTINE IN LOME, THE SEKOU TOURE VISIT
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GENERATED EXCEPTIONAL EXCITEMENT. THE CROWDS WHICH LINED
THE ROADS IN FROM THE AIRPORT WERE SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER THAN
THE NORMAL COLLECTION OF DRAGOONED SCHOOL CHILDREN AND
PEOPLE WAITING FOR THE POLICE TO LET THEM CROSS THE STREET.
PEOPLE TURNED OUT SPECIFICALLY TO SEE THE FAMOUS
SEKOU TOURE. THE PROGRAM INCLUDED AN EXCHANGE OF SPEECHES
BEFORE MASSED ANIMATEURS IN THE LARGE AUDITORIUM OF THE

RASSEMBLEMENT DU PEUPLE TOGOLAIS, A STATE DINNER, VISITS TO THE PRESIDENT'S HOME AT PYA IN NORTHERN TOGO AND OTHER INTERIOR CITIES. AT EACH STOP, LARGER THAN NORMAL CROWDS TURNED OUT TO HEAR SEKOU TOURE EXERCISE HIS ORATORICAL TALENTS.

3. SUBSTANTIVELY, THE VISIT PRODUCED A COMMUNIQUE WHICH STRESSED AREAS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN TOGO AND GUINEA. THE COMMUNIQUE PREDICTABLY DENOUNCED MERCENARIES AND FAVORED NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOVEREIGN STATES. THE CHIEFS OF STATE AGREED TO CONDEMN THE "IMPERIALIST MANEUVERS" WHICH HAD CREATED TWO KOREAS. THEY CALLED FOR THE RETREAT OF ISRAEL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND SUPPORTED THE RIGHTS OF ALL OF THE STATES IN THE REGION TO LIVE IN SECURE, RECOGNIZED FRONTIERS. THEY CONDEMNED SOUTH AFRICA AND APARTHEID. AVOIDING SPECIFICS ON THE RHODESIAN SITUATION, THEY LIMITED THEMSELVES TO AN EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR THE "HERTIC PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE." CONCERNING NAMIBIA THE CHIEFS OF STATE WERE "OF THE OPINION THAT THE SOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIVE WESTERN POWERS WOULD RESPOND TO THE LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF THE NAMIBIAN PEOPLE IF IT WERE LARGELY IMPROVED IN THE SENSE OF THE WISHES OF SWAPO."

4. CONCERNING ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, THE TWO CHIEFS ENDORSED ECOWAS AND PUT THEMSELVES ON RECORD AS FAVORING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND A NEW ECONOMIC ORDER. SOMEWHAT CRYPTICALLY, THEY EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION "AT THEIR TRUE VALUE" OF THE ACTIONS OF ARAB OIL PRODUCERS AIMED AT AIDING THE AFRICAN STATES PARTICULARLY AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS.

5. FINALLY, THEY SIGNED THREE AGREEMENTS: A TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE; A COOPERATION AGREEMENT IN ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL MATTERS; AND AN ACCORD CREATING A JOINT COMMISSION CHARGED WITH IMPROVING COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE PROGRAM INCLUDED "WORKING SESSIONS," IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS WERE NOT RAISED. CERTAINLY THE MAJOR PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS SYMBOLIC. FOR EYADEMA, IT WAS A CHANCE TO BRIGHTEN HIS IMAGE BY ASSOCIATION WITH ONE OF THE HISTORICAL FIGURES OF AFRICA'S INDEPENDENCE ERA; FOR SEKOU TOURE, THE VISIT HELPED TO EFFACE THE "HERMIT OF CONAKRY" IMAGE THAT LONG YEARS OF PARANOID ISOLATION HAVE GIVEN HIM.

7. ALTHOUGH SEKOU TOURE'S VISIT STIMULATED A DEGREE OF
UNDENIABLE POPULAR ENTHUSIASM, ELITE CIRCLES WERE
LESS IMPRESSED. SOMEHOW SEKOU TOURE SEEMED A MAN OF THE
PAST, MORE A HISTORICAL FIGURE THAN AN INFLUENTIAL LEADER
IN PRESENT DAY AFRICA. SEKOU TOURE'S LONG AND ELOQUENT
SPEECHES APPLAUDING AFRICAN UNITY AND REVOLUTION SEEMED
MORE APPROPRIATE TO THE INDEPENDENCE ERA THAN AFRICA
20 YEARS LATER.

8. IRONICALLY, SEKOU TOURE'S VISIT CAME AT A TIME WHEN
TOGO WAS PREPARING AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO SUPPORT THE
MOBUTU GOVERNMENT IN ZAIRE. SEKOU TOURE IS KNOWN TO BE
TOTALLY OPPOSED TO SUCH A POLICY BUT, AS A POLITE GUEST,
IT IS UNDERSTOOD HE DID NOT PRESS HIS POINT OF VIEW.
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